

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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News Release

Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts
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Harrisonburg High School places sixth at international environmental education contest



Harrisonburg High School receives international environmental honors

High school students from across the U.S. and Canada convened July 29-August 3 in Geneva, New York, to participate in North America's largest high school environmental education competition. Participants learned about environmental issues affecting natural resources as they competed for awards in the *2007 Canon Envirothon*.

More than 260 teenagers from more than 40 U.S. states and nine Canadian provinces studied environmental issues and resource conservation, while competing for a share of more than \$100,000 in scholarships and prizes. Organized through the National Association of Conservation Districts in the U.S. and The Canadian Forestry Associations, the competition tests teams on knowledge of soils/land use, forestry, aquatic ecology, wildlife and this year's current issue of alternative renewable energy.

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Harrisonburg High School receives international environmental honors – p. 2

The Virginia Team, Harrisonburg High School represented the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts and the Shenandoah Valley Soil and Water Conservation District. Team members are Martha Skelley, Yang Liu, Carly Byers, Olivia Quach and Camila Domonoske. Coached by Ross Bair, and sponsored by the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, the Virginia Manufacturers Association Outreach Group, Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund and Philip Morris; the team advanced to the national competition and won the competition. Each member was awarded a \$ 1,400.00 college scholarship.

The *Canon Envirothon* is the culmination of a series of competitions that began during the past school year and involved more than 500,000 teenagers throughout North America. In written tests and oral presentations, five member teams from schools and organizations competed for the distinction of representing their state or province at the *Canon Envirothon*.

Each team's knowledge is tested under the supervision of foresters, soil scientists, wildlife specialists and other natural resource professionals. Teamwork, problem solving and oral presentation skills are evaluated as each team offers a panel of judges an oral presentation containing recommendations for solving an environmental challenge that will be presented during the competition.

This is the twelfth year Virginia has participated in the Envirothon Program. For four years straight, the Virginia team has placed in the top six overall teams at the event. We would like to thank all of our sponsors, teachers, students, volunteers and judges for making this event such a huge success.

If you would like more information on starting an Envirothon team at your high school through 4-H, FFA, Ecology Club or home school group, contact your local soil and water conservation district or the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts at (804) 559-0324 or dana.roberts@vaswcd.org or <http://www.vaswcd.org/envirothon.htm>

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